

SECRET WAR SCRIPT

ISSUE ONE

BY BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS

PAGE 1-

1- Ext. Harlem- dusk

The sky floats in crimson. Sun setting in Harlem.

Luke Cage and the lovely Jessica Jones walks towards us on the sidewalk of his block.

Luke is holding two bags of groceries. He is not dressed in either the silk yellow shirt or the homeboy Cage outfit. He is dressed like he was in Alias 1. Nice clothes, black leather jacket.

Jessica and Luke are having a nice walk, down his street in Harlem. The point of this page is for the audience to really instantly like Luke Cage. The whole thrust of the mystery anchors on everyone liking Luke from this one scene.

In the foreground, is a couple of Harlem kids playing on the stoop. They are bouncing a basketball. Just fucking around drinking Yoo Hoo out of the bottle.

Reads: Harlem, today

LUKE CAGE

Could you just talk to him, Jessica?

JESSICA JONES

Iron Fist does not need a new costume.

LUKE CAGE

Some kid made a crack about his boots.

JESSICA JONES

One kid makes a crack and Danny thinks-

LUKE CAGE  
Promised him I would ask you.

JESSICA JONES  
I'll talk to him.

2- Luke Cage is at the steps of his apartment building surrounded by three Harlem kids that look ridiculously small next to the massive frame of the local living legend- Luke Cage.

Jessica is smiling and nodding her head to herself as Luke gets in the face of these teenage black kids. Luke is not just a superhero, he protects his neighborhood.

One kid is kind of goofing around with Luke, talking trash, but Luke leans in on him and stops him in his tracks.

KID  
Luke Cage, hero for hire.

KID 2  
Hey, you really got unbreakable skin?

KID 3  
How do you sweat?

LUKE CAGE  
Any you yo's hear anything about a red convertible  
dealing on the playground at ps 44.

3- From behind Luke, looking down on all the kids look guilty, but they aren't. They just don't want this huge superhero to beat the shit out of them.

KID  
Mah man, no. I am clean.

I am clean. He is clean. He is clean.

KID 2  
I am so clean.

LUKE CAGE  
Well, instead a'bouncin' a ball against each other's  
heads all night...

4- Luke cocks a suspicious eyebrow. Semi- enjoying busting these kids balls into doing something worthwhile.

LUKE CAGE

...why don't you proactively involve yourself in the community.

I want a name.

Guys dealin' to kids. And we don't like that?

Why?

5- Luke leans in to one kid's scared face. Luke smiling but means business.

KID

(whispers)

'Cause kids' is our future?

LUKE CAGE

'Cause I said so, yo.

I'm going to eat my dinner with my lady and then I am coming back out here...

...And I'm going to want a name.

Page 2-

1- Int. Luke Cage's shitty apartment- Same

Luke and Jessica are in the doorway of his apartment.

This apartment is established in Daredevil 43, so get the reference if you can.

Luke's apartment is pretty shitty, low rent for a street level superhero living in Harlem. There is clothing everywhere and a couple of superhero souvenirs he has picked up over the years.

This is the opposite of the batcave. A no money, ghetto bachelor pad.

On the wall is a big framed picture of Powerman and Iron Fist in his yellow shirt disco days.

Luke is never home and it shows, clutter everywhere. Musty.

JESSICA JONES

They're just kids... teen-

LUKE CAGE

In two years they're going to be more than kids-

2- Same as one, but tighter, Luke is smiling at Jessica, but Jessica is staring ahead into the apartment and she sees something that makes her face drop into quiet, reserved shock.

LUKE CAGE

-it's better to work 'em a little now sos I have their respect when the-

3- Luke and Jessica's p.o.v. Wide of the inside of the apartment.

A female silhouette, long hair, nice figure. Standing across the poorly lit room, her form backlit to the windows. Backlit to the setting red sun.

4- Luke drops the groceries and steps in front of Jessica. Blocking her from harm's way.

LUKE CAGE

Wow...

Stupid don't even begin to describe what you just did, lady.

Breakin' into my pad?

5- Tight on the female silhouette. Unmoving.

VOICE

I know where I am, Luke Cage.

Did you think you'd actually get away with it?

So silly.

6- Tight on Luke squinting. Just figuring out what this is about.

LUKE CAGE  
(whispers)  
Christmas...

Page 3-

1- Ext. Luke Cage's apartment building- Same

Tall panel. Low looking up to a wide exterior shot of the apartment building.

The yo's from the stoop all look up in shock as the third floor erupts. Not an explosion so much as a wave of bright white energy that tears out the windows and some of the concrete.

Its sudden and violent. From any angle in looks bad.

2- High looking down at the kids at the stoop of the apartment building. Debris falls but the kids all stand still and react in open mouthed horror.

The abandoned basketball bounces on its own.

Page 4-

1- Ext. S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier- day

Big panel. Across both pages. A gorgeous establishing shot of the S.H.I.E.L.D. helicarrier.

Worm's eye view looking up at the gorgeous blue sky.

The giant silver S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier descends out of the clouds. Its bow taking up a mile of the early dawn sky.

U.S. Fighter planes flying off and around it in formation. The biggest flying tank in the world keeping watch over all of us.

Reads: S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier.

Floating world headquarters of the U.N. Peace keeping task force.

Present location: 1000 feet over Langley, West Virginia

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

We're still keeping an eye on the pirate website rings.

Last night, We found and shut down a site that had a formula for a gas that effected the central nervous system- chemically heightening a human's sense of terror-

Supposably a paralyzing fear that was supposedly created originally by-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Mr. Fear.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

You're such a nerd.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Was it Mr. Fear?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

Nerd!

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Card carrying.

2- Int. S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier- day

Wide of the SHIELD mission room. This is the morning briefing.

A dozen young S.H.I.E.L.D. Agents sit around a huge glass conference table in a huge glass and metal war room. Each one of them has a high tech lap top screen in front of them instead of papers and folders.

Nick Fury sits at the far end of the conference table and everything about his demeanor says defeat. He is unemotional, uncaring, and bored. This old war horse is now living a sterile, ineffectual life.

The high tech walls are covered with tons of live video screens monitoring just about everything on the planet. Digital world maps are mapping out the complex global political situation.

Maybe one screen has a profile of Madame Hydra up with a locator map, as if they always have a location for her whereabouts.

The screens show a bombardment of information about the marvel universe. It shows how wide in scope Nick's p.o.v. Is as supposed to most everyone elses. This is the big picture flying by at a blinding speed.

Gorgeous blond AGENT CARTER is leading the meeting. She is addressing the group and standing across the long table from Nick.

Also sitting around the table is agent Woo, Sitwell, Dum Dum Dugan, Clay Quartermain, Gabe Wilson, and Countess Valentina Allegro DeFontaine.

The countess is Nick's old flame and she is much more aware of Nick's funk than anyone else. Their connection is a subtle thing but it's definitely there.

This is a very sterile cold environment.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

Early this morning, We received several cryptic reports out of Israel...

...Sabra shut down a terrorist cell that was planning a nerve gas attack on the Gaza strip.

Page 5-

1- Full figure- waist level. Side of the table. Nick sits at the end of this huge table. He sits towards us and away from everyone else like a defeated king.

A giant digital map of the world behind him taking up the entire background.

He ignores the small screen in front of him showing graphics and text that match the report he is getting.

He looks like he is not listening. But basically its just that he has heard this all before, over and over and over again.

He sits like a defeated King Arthur.

The voices come from off panel.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

Also last night, The president of Afghanistan went on national Afghan television and declared the astral plane an Afghan territory.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
The astral plane?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
It goes against the U.N.'s stance on-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
Why not declare La La land a territory.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
Either way, the US secretary of defence wants to meet with us about putting together an astral plane training seminar for agents to-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
The astral plane? Wow.

2- Same, but tighter.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
Moving on, A new book by Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward is coming out next month that says the President has grave doubts about S.H.I.E.L.D.'s Involvement in the Hydra situation in Baghdad last year.

3- Same, but tighter.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
Let's see, oh yes...

In Harlem, last night there was some sort of explosion. Luke Cage is in the hospital.

In a coma. Says in serious condition.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
Power-man, hero for hire. Tsk, love that guy.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER



His girlfriend, Jessica Jones, survived the attack.  
Local police are investigating.

4- Same but Nick Fury's finally looks to the voices off to the left. This caught his attention.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
As is S.H.I.E.L.D. Policy we'll wait for their reports  
before making a decision if we need to do our own  
investigation.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
Luke Cage, man.

You ever see this guy in action? This guy is cool.  
Not prepackaged cool. Really cool.

NICK FURY  
Luke Cage is in a coma?

5- Over Nick's shoulder, wide of the war room. Everyone turns to look at Nick. As if they almost forgot he was there. Almost surprised to hear Nick Fury speak.

You get the feeling that he hasn't spoken up at these meetings in quite a while.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER  
Y- yes, Colonel Fury.

He- he was attacked in his home.

Some sort of explosion or implosion.

We don't have any details as of yet.

Do you know him, sir?

6- Tight on Nick Fury's face. Nick just stares ahead- his eyes down.

His rugged face crinkled with worry and regret. He doesn't answer.

1- Int. Hospital- day

Luke Cage lies in a coma and has oxygen tubes in his nose. He is hooked up to an IV and machinery to keep an eye on his vitals.

There is immense amount of tubing going into his mouth. More than usual. They can't break his skin so they have to do it this way.

Danny Rand aka Iron Fist, in civilian clothes is reading sport's scores to his friend. Danny is a wreck but holding it together- Luke in this condition is his worst fear realized.

Jessica, her arm in a sling, a bandaged gash on her cheek, is sitting on the other side of the bed, staring at Luke with a quiet blank shock. She doesn't speak.

This scene is very warm, Siena, all browns. Very godfather. Late day sun pouring in. The opposite of the helicarrier's cold whites and blues.

DANNY RAND

Nozemack scored 22 points and, uh, made the game-winning three-point play in overtime as the Indiana Pacers beat the Milwaukee Bucks 103-100

keeping them unbeaten at home and atop the Eastern Conference.

2- Jessica in the foreground stares off panel. A distraught Danny, losing the energy even to read.

DANNY RAND

The Pacers -- 7-1 overall and 6-0 at Conseco Fieldhouse -- have won six straight since losing at New Jersey on Nov. 1.

3- From behind Luke wide of the hospital room. Nick Fury, in a very stylish black long coat, looks at this scene with reserved sadness.

DANNY RAND

Blah blah blah... they are off to their best start since they were 9-1 in the 1969-70 season in the ABA.

4- Danny sees him and half sits up. Jessica just looks. No expression.

DANNY RAND

Oh-

Oh hey, Nick Fury?

5- Fury gently approaches and shakes his hand, Danny is half standing. Danny knows who Nick is and wants to stand as a sign of respect but Nick steps in and almost doesn't let him.

NICK FURY

Danny Rand.

Iron Fist, right?

DANNY RAND

Yeah, yeah- uh- what are you doing here?

NICK FURY

I came as soon as I heard.

DANNY RAND

I didn't know you knew Luke.

6- Nick looks at Luke with a lot of regret.

NICK FURY

Yeah, I knew him a little.

What's with all the tubes and-

DANNY RAND

I know. The doctors- they can't break his skin. So they- they had to find alternatives to keep... Him...

(Oh god...)

He suffered severe trauma to his internal organs, but they can't perform any kind of surgery-

And isn't this always the way, his greatest power standing in the way of letting these doctors even figure out what...

1- Tighter on a devastated Danny looking down at Luke in a situation he never thought he would see him in.

Nick puts his hand on Danny's shoulder, he tries to comfort him.

2- Something occurs to Jessica, she glares at Nick fury suspiciously.

3- From behind Nick, Jessica looks back, vaguely suspiciously at Nick Fury.

4- Nick looks at Jessica. A tad of guilty washed on his face..

5- Same as 3, but tighter on Jessica.

JESSICA JONES

Do you know who did this to him?

I mean, why are you here?

See what I'm saying?

6- Tighter on a stoic Nick Fury. He isn't going to answer.

Page 8-

The rest of this issue is a flashback. Different color scheme, much brighter, full color, almost happier. More positive.

1- TV screen. Big panel.

Ext. New York City rooftop- day

We are watching video footage of Killer Shrike (get the reference, cool character) getting his ass batted by Iron man.

This is TV news helicopter footage of a very typical, very Buscema style, old school, Marvel fist fight.

We are using the iconic fight as the springboard to start unwrapping the thrust of the story.

So every angle of this footage is high looking down. Its a helicopter far from the action but filming with a telephoto lens, handheld, camera work. So feel free to design the shots crooked and poorly.

Iron man is hovering over a rooftop and blasting his repulsor rays down at Killer Shrike who is just hanging on after what we assume is a big fight.

The floating word balloons cascade on the right side of the page.

Reads: ONE YEAR AGO

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Now this is damn fine television.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

This is why they invented television.

KILLER SHRIKE

Can I call my lawyer?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Ho- hold on. Just hold on.

2- Same, this is still the helicopter footage of Iron man and Killer Shrike, Killer Shrike is blasting at Iron-man in a panic and is getting ready to run like hell in the other direction.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

So- There you are barely keeping up with Iron man.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

The Invincible Iron man.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

You're having your ass handed to you pretty good...

Ah! There!

You finally sober up and decide to run like a little girl.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Here it comes.

3- Same angle- high looking down. Killer Shrike makes a break for it. He runs away from Iron man, away from us, turning back to see if he is being chased by Iron man.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

This is my favorite part.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Wait for it- wait for it.

4- Same angle. Killer Shrike turns around just in time to smack his face into Thor's chest. He runs right into him like its a brick wall.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Here it- OH!!

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Right into the arms of the mighty Thor

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

That hadta hurt.!!

Page 9-

1- Int. S.h.i.e.l.d. Headquarters- Interrogation room- Same

We now reveal that the video footage we are watching is being broadcast on a TV that rolled into this small interrogation room on an AV cart.

A standard interrogation room. A bare room.

All there is a heavy card table and two folding chairs. The table is bolted down. The chairs aren't. Some piping down the walls. One hanging lamp from above aimed over the head of the suspect- which in this case is Killer Shrike.

Shrike is beat down and nervous. He is caught, he is in custody. He is being mocked by agents and incredibly embarrassed by the footage he was just shown.

Shrike is still in half his costume. They have taken away his mask, cape, and weapons and are making him sit through this interrogation in what amount to a one piece leotard.

On one of the walls is a high tech two way mirror that looks just like a wall. We will reveal that this interrogation is being observed and recorded.

(See the TV show Homicide for perfect visual reference.)

Two shield agents, John Woo and Jasper Stilwell, (get the reference they are famous SHIELD agents) are not in uniform and are interrogating Killer Shrike. They are leaning in and laughing in Shrike's face.

On the TV screen the footage continues to play. Iron man picks up a beaten Killer Shrike and tosses him into the side of a brick wall rooftop entrance.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

I always wondered-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

What is that Special Agent Stilwell?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

I wonder what it must feel like to see yourself on TV, dressed, you know, like that, getting your ass handed to you so badly?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

So badly.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

I mean, I was embarrassed for you and I don't even like you.

2- From behind the agents looking at Simon Maddicks aka Killer Shrike.

He is beat down and nervous. He is caught. He is in custody. He is being mocked by agents and incredibly embarrassed by the footage he was just shown.

KILLER SHRIKE

(meekly)

I-I-I think I get a lawyer.

3- Killer Shrike's p.o.v. Of the two agents looking down and smiling at him/ us. They are being very obnoxious and condescending.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Super villain Killer Shrike wants a lawyer.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

What the \$%#@ is a Shrike, exactly?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Simon Maddicks aka Killer Shrike is caught red handed by the Mighty Avengers of New York city...

...and now he thinks a lawyer is going to save his sorry, b- level, uninspired super tuchas.

4- Same as 2, but tighter.

KILLER SHRIKE

I-I have rights. I've been arrested before, I know my-

5- Same as five, but they lean in on him, really enjoying mentally torturing him, behind them the two way mirror glares back.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Oh, we know you've been arrested before. We know aaaaaall about you.

We know about your surgically implanted anti-gravity generator in the base of your spine

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

We know about your extensive martial arts training.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

We know about your head to toe strength enhancing body armor.

6- Profile of the table. James Woo holds up one of Killer Shrike's wristbands which he is dangling from a large see through plastic evidence bag.

Maddicks looks at it sadly, this is not good.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Aaaand We know about your weapons system in the form of these custom made, twin power blasters you wear on each wrist.



Double page spread

1- Over Nick Fury's shoulder silhouette shoulder, Looking into the interrogation room from the room behind the high tech two way mirror.

(We will reveal Nick soon.)

We are looking behind the two shield agents, past them to the darting nervous eyes of Killer Shrike.

Woo is still holding up the bracelet and dangling it in front of Shrike.

Woo and Sitwell are having a very coy conversation with each other and ignoring Shrike.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Did you know that each bracelet has two curved titanium talons?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Really?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

And these bracelets, being a custom make, these bracelets can discharge a high- frequency bolt of electricity with a maximum charge of 35, 000 volts.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Really? Wow.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Yes.

2- Back to the interrogation room. Shrike is sulking in his seat. He is taking this abuse like a bitch.

He is glancing over at the TV footage that is still playing on a loop to torture him. Thor is hitting him into iron man.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

So, Agent Sitwell, I guess we basically know everything about this low rent supervillain piece of crap who never really amounted to anything.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

We do.

Except for what the hell a Shrike is, and whet makes him so Killer?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Oh!

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

What?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

You know what else we don't know?

3- Shrike's p.o.v. The agents are on either side of the TV, talking to each other, re-examining the Iron man beating on TV.

Woo looks at the bracelet, sitwell looks to woo.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

What is that?

JAMES WOO

Well, According to his bank statements- Shrike has 6,345 dollars in savings and 2,344 dollars in checking.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Ok...

JAMES WOO

He has no other accounts, secret or other, open in his name...

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Ok.

JAMES WOO

No safety deposit boxes..

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Alright.

JAMES WOO

And no money stashed under his mattress.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Huh.

4- Tighter on Shrike, he is feeling very agitated and violated.

KILLER SHRIKE

Y- you Feds can't just detain me, I- I have the right to-

5- Woo is not fucking around anymore. He looks Shrike dead in the eye and lays the question down. This is the real point of the interrogation.

JAMES WOO

So the question I have is,

How can he afford the maintenance on a surgically implanted anti gravity generator imbedded in the base of your spine, head to toe body armor, or the custom made twin power blasters he wears on each wrist?

6- Shrike's eyes dart around. He doesn't understand why this line of questioning is going on and now he's getting god damn nervous.

KILLER SHRIKE

(whispers)

Wait...

...What is this?

7- The agents lean in. They aren't fucking around anymore, they want answers. Shrike actually holds up a hand to block them- flinching.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Jeez, yeah, way I see it that's gotta run in the tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Minimum.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Where does a guy like you-

KILLER SHRIKE

What kind of-?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Get the bankroll you need just to-

KILLER SHRIKE

I-

8- Same but tighter, they are all over him. Killer Shrike is stammering and overwhelmed, they are getting to him.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Who is writing the checks?

KILLER SHRIKE

You Feds aren't-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

We don't care two little craps about the likes of  
you-

KILLER SHRIKE

I-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Give us the name- who writes the checks.

9- Same but tighter. Shrike tries to stand up to them pointing in their faces.

KILLER SHRIKE

Hey, listen, I want my lawyer!! I want my phone  
call, you Feds.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

You keep calling us federal agents?

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Who said we were FBI?

10- Shrike's face drops. He realizes just what kind of hot water he is in.

KILLER SHRIKE

You're-

You're s.h.i.e.l.d. Agents?

Page 12-

1- Shrike's p.o.v. Of the agents.

2- Same as 4. Last page. Shrike's in deep shit.

3- Same as 5. Last page.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Who is underwriting you? Where's the money coming from? We want a name.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

We'll make it easy for you.

We know the Phineas Mason, the Tinkerer, is comping you.

We want to know why!

We want to know where he is!

4- From behind the agents, a panicked Shrike gets up out of his chair. He stumbles back on his chair as he begins to panic.

KILLER SHRIKE

Oh come on!! Come on!!

5- Agent woo grabs Shrike by the neck and flips him right over the table.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Give up a name!

KILLER SHRIKE

Come on!

6- Profile. Agent woo picks Shrike up and throws him against the two way mirror wall. Facing away from him, mashing his face into what looks like a regular wall.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

You're going away forever and ever.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
You were stupid enough to get video taped.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
Not a court in the land- not a court in the land isn't  
going to gleefully let you rot in Ryker's.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
And I gotta say: you take out the surgically  
implanted anti gravity generator, your head to toe  
body armor and your cute little bracelets...

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
...I don't think you'll last two minutes in Ryker's.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
Oh, you know who else is in Ryker's, his old friend  
Hammerhead.

KILLER SHRIKE  
Oh no.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
Oh yes, and I think The Punisher just got pinched.

KILLER SHRIKE  
Oh no.

7- From the other side of the high tech mirror. From behind the arm and shoulder of Nick Fury.

Woo and sitwell are mushing Shrike's face against what we now understand is the mirror.  
They are really yelling at him, not letting up.

KILLER SHRIKE  
Ok, aarrggh!!!  
  
ok...

8- A poorly lit Nick Fury, cocks a pleased eyebrow.

This is Nick a year earlier but he looks seven years younger, he is enjoying this but isn't  
giving it too much. Just a small smirk.

KILLER SHRIKE

I'll tell ya anything you want- just- just...

9- Similar to eight. The agents knowingly smile at their colonel through the glass. They keep mushing Shrike's face for him. They got it.

KILLER SHRIKE

I wantsha deal. I wantsha deal to shhhtay outta  
Ryker'sh.

Ow!! Want a deal!

Page 13-

1- Ext. Philadelphia city street- day

Mid- shot. Simon Maddicks out of costume is standing in front of an old style cobblestone warehouse on the east side of Philly.

The street has people milling about- but we will reveal they are all SHIELD agents. There is a diaper service van across the street from him.

Reads: Philadelphia

2- Profile. Simon Maddicks is looking up at the building, he is shitting in his pants.

He is wired, the shield agents are using his to build a case on the Tinkerer.

KILLER SHRIKE

(whispers)

You guys better live up to your end of the deal. I  
mean it, man...

3- Int. Van- Same.

Woo and Sitwell are in an impossibly high tech surveillance van. They have infra red read outs of Maddicks and all kinds of camera angles of the building.

Both agents have high tech headsets and cannot contain their disdain for him.

KILLER SHRIKE

(on speaker)

...I can't do Ryker's.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO  
Just do it the way we said, Shrike.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
Jeez, what a class A ninny.

4- Ext. Warehouse building side entrance- Same

Killer Shrike rings the bell and whispers.

KILLER SHRIKE  
I can hear you.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL  
I know.

5- Tight on the old fashioned intercom talk box- it squaks.

TINKERER  
Who is it?

6- Profile of a nervous Shrike. The van in the far background.

KILLER SHRIKE  
Its me, Simon Maddicks.

7- Same as 5.

TINKERER  
What do you want?

8- Shrike is nervous, not up to the challenge, but he is holding it together.

KILLER SHRIKE  
I'm having trouble with my left wrist band.  
  
Its got a short or something.



Page 14-

1- Same as 7, last page.

TINKERER

I thought you got pinched.

2- Int. Van- Same

Both woo and sitwell wince. The Tinkerer might not fall for it. On the screens around them we see Killer Shrike's eyes dart and he sweats as he tries to hold it together.

KILLER SHRIKE

Me? No. No I dodged it.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Uh oh.

3- Ext. Doorway- Same

Small panel. Same as 1.

TINKERER

You alone?

4- Small panel. Tighter On Shrike wincing at the pause. Flop sweating.

5- Int. Van- Same

Small panel. Both woo and sitwell wince at the pause.

6- Ext. Doorway- Same

Small panel. Shrike looking around for a camera, but there is none.

KILLER SHRIKE

Yeah.

Course.

7- Mid shot of the doorway, the tension lifts as he is making it past the door.

TINKERER

Ok, come on up.

8- Killer Shrike breathes a sigh of relief and eyeballs the van behind him as he grabs the buzzing bronze door latch.

Spx: bbbzzzzzzzzzz

9- Tight on his hand pushing down that latch on the lock.

Spx: bbbzzzzzzzzzzcock

Page 15-

1- Big panel. Killer Shrike's body electrocutes and starts to melt. The latch was booby trapped. His entire body spasms and sparks in an intense

2- Int. Van- Same

The shield agents jump into action. Woo throws his coffee down and grabs a high tech shield weapon off the wall of the van.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Ah, crap!

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Mission compromised!! repeat, mission  
compromised!!

Everyone on ground alpha formation, niner six five.

3- Ext. Warehouse- day

Huge action panel. High looking down. Wide of the street. Everyone on the street is an agent and they jump into action. Some storm the building, others catapult to the roof using rocket shoes.

A couple of agents go to Shrike, but it is too late.

All the cars on the street are shield cars. They take off into the air.

It's a real sight, but this is when we get a sense of the scope of a shield planned organization. They had the entire block blocked off.

This is a high tech military operation.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Secure the entire block.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT

Shrike is gone.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Someone get one eye eagle on the-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT

Take the roof.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT

Helicarrier, we need confirmation of-

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JAMES WOO

Fury's going to kill you.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT JASPER SITWELL

Bet he kills you first.

Page 16-

1- Int. Tinkerer's shadow laden warehouse- night

Nick Fury snake eyes the scene. Very noir shadows on his grimaced, pissed off, gravelly face.

2- Big, big panel. Huge panel.

The Tinkerer's lab- a cobbled together but high tech mess of a lab. The cluttered work space of a cluttered mind.

Also, severe shadows and bad lighting mire this huge warehouse floor. The windows long blacked in and boarded up. a very long time since it was cleaned and dusted. There are tons of machinery.

The only light on is at his cluttered work space and computer terminal. The Tinkerer was working on a scorpion tail when he bolted.

Most impressively- Hanging from hooks or stored in glass cases for storage, not for display is what ads up to nothing short of a museum of the technological villains of the Marvel universe.

Pieces, parts half costumes, whole costume and more of Shocker, Doc Ock, Schemer, Scorcher, The Beetle, Scorpion, Big Wheel, Goldbug, Whirlwind, Diamondback, Grizzly, Beetle, Killer Shrike, Vulture, Jack O' Lantern, Jester, grim Reaper, Ani-Men, Rocket Racer etc.

Nick is being tailed by agent carter who is updating him.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

-underground tunnel system not in the building plans.

In the basement, we found four, old passports with different names and some left over packs of hundred dollar bills.

3- Nick eyes one of the hanging costumes (your choice) and thinks. His cell phone beeps.

NICK FURY

So basically he could be anywhere.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT SHARON CARTER

Yes, sir. And he torched his hard drive.

Spx: bleep bloop bleep bleep

4- Small panel. Fury looks at the super high tech shield phone, the read out shows a picture and stats on none other that Natasha Romanov- the red haired Black Widow.

Spx: bleep bloop bleep bleep

5- Small panel. Slightly low looking up. Nick on the phone. Cocks an eyebrow.

NICK FURY

Natasha...

Page 17-

1- Int. Latverian airport- day

THE BLACK WIDOW is in a very European large airport. Crowded with travellers.

She is looking out past her big black sunglasses and scarf wrapped head. She obviously has something and is thrilled to report it.

She is blending and spying.

And by blending i mean she is wrapped in the most bland, grey, unattractive burka style outfit, her red hair in a black wig, her eyes covered in big old lady sunglasses.

BLACK WIDOW

You're loving me big time right now.

NICK FURY

What do you got, Natasha?

2- From behind the scarf and sunglasses wearing Black Widow, as she from her corner of the airport is watching the Tinkerer hobble towards the big glass front door.

He is pulling a small carry-on bag. It is taking a lot out of his decrepid old body.

Everything in Latveria looks like Madrid, Spain if it were in the middle of Iraq. The airport looks like Kuwait.

Soldiers everywhere. Every civilian in the airport looks emotionally repressed and scared. Terror part of their everyday lives.

Soldiers question anyone who looks out of the ordinary.

BLACK WIDOW

I got the Tinkerer.

3- Int. Tinkerer's shadow laden warehouse- same

Nick Fury perks up.

NICK FURY

Where are you?

4- Int. Airport- Same

From behind the scarf and sunglasses wearing Black Widow, she is slowly following him. He is out the glass door, she is still inside.

BLACK WIDOW

Latverian international airport, baby.

NICK FURY

Latveria?

BLACK WIDOW

Great place to be a woman, let me tell you.

5- Int. Tinkerer's shadow laden warehouse- same

Nick looks irritated by this turn of events. Agent carter watching him.

NICK FURY

Follow him.

BLACK WIDOW

No Duh.

NICK FURY

Is he alone.

BLACK WIDOW

He is- oh...

NICK FURY

What?

Page 18-

1- Ext. Airport- Same

From outside the airport looking in. Black Widow is watching out the big window, not leaving the airport.

She looks intrigued by the new off panel development.

BLACK WIDOW

Someone is meeting him. Picking him up.

Someone friendly. Someone he knows.

NICK FURY

Who?

2- Int. Airport- Same

From behind the scarf and sunglasses wearing Black Widow, past the big glass window.

She watches the Tinkerer shake hands with two big, built well dressed men who has a black, shiny, Lincoln town car for him, he is grateful for the attention.

All this is going on as dozens of innocent bystanders mill about.

BLACK WIDOW

Don't know him.

NICK FURY

Find out.

3- Black Widow holds out her phone subtly. It is taking a picture.

BLACK WIDOW

I'm sending it now. The data base should identify  
and tag it.

4- Int. Tinkerer's shadow laden warehouse- Same

Nick watches his phone, the lights of the read out washing his disturbed face.

BLACK WIDOW

Huh.

NICK FURY

What?

5- Ext. Airport- Same

From behind Black Widow watches the black car drive away as she flags a cab and talks  
on the phone.

BLACK WIDOW

Government plates on the car.

Latverian government plates.

(Latverian for cab)

Flatuni!

6- Int. Tinkerer's shadow laden warehouse- Same

Nick grimaces as he reads the off panel info on his phone.

NICK FURY

Government plates.

Page 19-

1- Ext. The White house- bright sunny day

NICK FURY

Good morning, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT



Colonel Fury. What do you have for us?

2- Int. White house situation room- Same

This is the White House War room. See the TV show The West Wing for an exact duplication of the actual Situation room if you can't find the reference.

Several officers (secretary of defence, national security advisor, etc.) Sit around a long conference table. Papers are laid out all over the table.

On the walls are war maps and readouts, similar to the ones in the shield helicarrier but not as high tech.

This entire room looks like a dark shadowy version of the bright blue world of shield. Big, black shadows and dark brown woods.

On the walls are the digital read outs around the live maps and charts. One reads the local dc time.

Words like POTUS, ZULU, ALPHA bandy about the readings.

The chairman of the joint chiefs of staff is pouring himself some coffee.

Everyone in this scene, including the president is totally dripped in shadow. We see their arms on the table but not their faces.

We never get a good look of the president. (I know marvel continuity says we use the real sitting president, but who knows who will be president by the time this is done :)) and I also do not want to date the material.

From behind the silhouettes of the president. Nick Fury, the only person clearly visible and lit, is standing up across the long table and addressing the president and the join chiefs of military staff.

Behind Nick is a digital screen that will visually augment his official report.

Now on the screen is a SHIELD logo with type that reads: project circuit.

NICK FURY

Mr. President, for a couple of months, S.H.I.E.L.D.  
Has been working on a Project Code named  
CIRCUIT.

And we had a substantial break in the case this  
week.

3- Mid shot of the silhouette figure of the president, he is being handed as folder by one of the generals.

PRESIDENT

Refresh me, Fury.

4- Fury addresses the room professionally. Coolly. Behind him the type is now a picture of the beetle. The us map is highlighting where Albuquerque new Mexico is.

NICK FURY

It started during one of our routine investigations...

S.H.I.E.L.D. Agents did a follow up on a character known as Jack O' Lantern.

An idiot named Jason Macedale Jr. Who was apprehended after he robbed a federal bank in Albuquerque, New Mexico and tried to get on a flight to Australia.

Jason Macedale Jr. Robbed the bank in a self designed battle Kevlar panel suit using anesthetic, lachrymatory, regurgitant gas, smoke, and concussion custom designed grenades.

Page 20-

1- Profile of Nick calmly addressing the room.

NICK FURY

After an interrogation with FBI he was turned over to local SHIELD agents for further questioning.

It was during this questioning that one of our agents started crunching the numbers.

2- Nick's p.o.v. Wide of the room, the president dead center in the background. All the silhouette generals look to the silhouette president.

## GENERAL

Crunching the numbers?

3- Nick addresses the crowd. Trying to explain without treating everyone in the room like a child.

Behind him on screen, The Beetle schematic showing the inner workings of his elaborate suit is now up on the screen along with a head shot of his civilian identity.

## NICK FURY

This Jack O'Lantern had robbed a bank getting away with 11, 345 dollars.

The technology and hardware he used is worth well over a three quarters of a million dollars.

The difference between how much Macedale was making and how much his armor cost is staggering.

4- Big panel. Similar to three, but behind Fury is a grid of images, a dozen or so images of the technological villains of the Marvel universe.

Shocker, Doc ock, Schemer, Scorcher, The Beetle, Scorpion, Big Wheel, Goldbug, Whirlwind, Diamondback, Grizzly, Beetle, Killer Shrike, Vulture, Jack O' Lantern, Jester, Grim Reaper, Ani-Men, Rocket Racer etc.

In the middle is a grainy, surveillance photo, maybe the only photo of the crotchety old man... THE Tinkerer.

## NICK FURY

We have always been aware that many of these more technological themed criminals were getting their materials from an underground figure...

Phineas Mason a.k.a. The Tinkerer.

In return for what we imagined was a piece of the action.

And for years the Tinkerer had eluded our agents.

But during the Macedale's interrogation he admitted to us that someone else was, in fact, backing the Tinkerer's operation.

A decision was made to actively renew our efforts  
in pursuit of The Tinkerer.

Because if someone is backing these criminals  
financially, bankrolling them through the tinkerer...

5- Tight on Nick, this is the point of the entire story, he is very serious.

NICK FURY

Then, by definition, these are no longer crimes and  
these are no longer criminals...

...They're terrorists.

6- Nick Fury's p.o.v. Of the room. Nick lets the point sit. He lets it sink in. The president  
makes no move.

7- Nick continues to speak as an image off the Black Widow's camera phone broadcasts  
behind him.

The surveillance footage of the Tinkerer getting in a car with the two swarthy Latverians.

With close ups of the Tinkerer off the image digitally blown up and tagged.

NICK FURY

In our pursuit of the Tinkerer, we began  
interrogating any tech criminal that was brought into  
custody.

The Tinkerer continued to elude our agents.

Until this week when the Black Widow I.D.ed the  
Tinkerer in Latveria being escorted by Latverian  
Intel to the castle of..

Page 21-

1- Big panel. From behind Fury pops up a professional photograph of our enemy. Lucia Von Bardas a stunning, gorgeous, older European beauty. A cross between Madonna and Isabella Rosselini.

And a map of Latveria. A smaller picture of doctor doom who is no longer part of the Latverian equation.

NICK FURY

Lucia Von Bardas.

Elected prime minister of Latveria.

2- Wide profile of the room. The shadow room draws silent. Silent or uncomfortable?

3- Tight on the shadow laden president. His arms in light on the table, tensely pulling at a pen.

PRESIDENT

Well, colonel, that is a-

-that is quite a hard pill to swallow.

4- Nick nods respectfully and rustles his notes.

NICK FURY

I know sir, that's why I made this special trip... to brief you in person.

5- Same as 2. Wide of the room.

PRESIDENT

Fury, Lucia has bent over backwards to mend the ties between America and Latveria since the days of-

GENERAL

We got her elected.

PRESIDENT

The US government, just this year alone, has lent her country tens of millions in aid and...

GENERAL

72 million dollars in aid.

NICK FURY

Yes.

Yes, Sir.

And it hurts to imagine what she has done with that money knowing what we now know.

6- The president is ending the conversation but it isn't clear yet.

PRESIDENT

Thank you, colonel.

7- Nick turns the page in the folder in front of him. There's another uncomfortable pause but Nick isn't aware of it as he about to go further with his report.

NICK FURY

I have a recommended response scenario for the-

8- Same as 6.

PRESIDENT

That won't be necessary.

9- Similar to 7, but Nick looks up confused.

NICK FURY

I'm sorry?

Page 22-

1- Nick's p.o.v of the unfriendly, shadow laden room of mystery power men. This has turned into a full blown ominous room.

PRESIDENT

That won't be necessary.

2- Mid shot. Nick just stares, he can't believe what he is hearing but is keeping his military professionalism.

NICK FURY

Sir...

If I may...

We can only assume that this situation is going to escalate.

The next phase will be an organized-

3- Same as 1.

PRESIDENT

Fury, I appreciate your enthusiasm but we have this under control.

4- Same as 2, but tighter. Nick tries to get a hold of this situation even though he shouldn't question his commander in chief. He just can't help himself.

NICK FURY

Due respect, sir, I can't see how that could be.

5- Tight on the president, who, behind the shadows, we imagine is quite angry.

PRESIDENT

The secretary of defence has a pleasant relationship with Lucia,

We'll handle things...

...diplomatically.

6- Same as 4, but tighter.

NICK FURY

Sir, personal relationships notwithstanding we have evidence here that clearly identifies a threat to-

7- Wide of the room, now its nothing but damn uncomfortable, Fury realizing just how unwanted and unwelcome he and his report is.

PRESIDENT

Colonel...

Thank you for your report.

8- Tight on Nick Fury, barely holding his military composure.

NICK FURY

Thank you, Mr. President.

Page 23-

1- Ext. White house- day

Nick Fury is storming out the front door and right for us. This is outside the front of the White House but still in a secure area.

This is the cobblestone walk by the ornate lawn of the white house. Get reference.

Nick looks like he is going to explode. He is totally flabbergasted. Uncharacteristically at his wit's end. He is wearing a very stylish, long leather coat.



Countess Valentina Allegro DeFontaine jumps from her leaning post, she was waiting here for Nick. But he breezes right by her. She is immediately tuned in to his horrible mood.

Both have security badges on. High clearance.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT VALENTINA

Nick? Nick, what happened?

2- Nick spins around, looking at the white house, not Valentina. He is beside himself with frustration.

NICK FURY

I- I- Its happening again, Valentina.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT VALENTINA

What?

NICK FURY

Its happening again!

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT VALENTINA

What?

3- Tight on a lost Nick, he is reliving all the horrors of war from his long, long life.

NICK FURY

Its all happening again.

They have the information, they have it!

They know who and they-

Irrefutable evidence in their hands as to who their enemy is...

And they are going to sit on it and do nothing.

4- From behind Valentina, he looks at her for the first time, his eyes begging for help.

NICK FURY

They are going to blink and try to play by rules of diplomacy that no one else plays by...

...and people are going to die.

Innocent people are going to die because of this,  
right here.

I can't- I can't go through it again.

5- Valentina looks at Nick staring off in total helpless despair, she has never seen him like this.

NICK FURY

(whispers)

Its happening again.

S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT VALENTINA

What are you going to do?

Page 24-

Back to present day

1- Int. Hospital- day

Same angle on Nick from last page but we are back to present time. Back to Luke cage's hospital room.

Same scene, lighting, and dour color scheme from page seven.

Nick is looking down at Luke Cage lying in a coma with wide eyed regret, barely holding back a gravelly sob.

2- From behind Nick and Danny. Over their shoulder's looking down at the still impossible sight of the huge power man, Luke Cage lying in a coma, oxygen tubes in his nose. He is hooked up to an IV and machinery to keep an eye on his vitals.

Danny Rand aka Iron Fist, in civilian clothes is still in the room. Still holding it together- Luke in this condition is his worst fear realized.

Jessica is just staring at Nick, she knows it has something to do with him.

3- Profile. Tight on a distraught Nick, whispering to himself. Danny rand looks at Luke with a detective's curiosity.

NICK FURY

What have I done?

NEXT ISSUE: THE GATHERING OF HEROES